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Garth Ennis
Darick Robertson
The BOYS
THIRTY-SEVEN
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Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS

THIRTY-SEVEN

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys**.

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BELIEVE
BELIEVE
C'EST L'HEURE...!
GAHH!!
BELIEVE
JESUS CHRIST, FRENCHIE, I NEARLY FUCKIN' SHAT MYSELF THERE--!
IN FRANCE WE HAVE A SAYING: "C'EST L'HEURE."

WHICH IS TO SAY, THE TIME HAS COME.
TODAY, PETIT HUGHIE, C'EST L'HEURE HAS COME FOR YOU TO KNOW MY STORY...
BELIEVE
SO--IS EVERYONE JUST GONNA START TELLIN' ME--
ECOUTE!
CAN YOU HEAR IT, PETIT HUGHIE? THE STRAINING MELODY OF THE ACCORDION?
NYEEEHH, NYEH-NYEH-NYEH-NYYEEEEEEEEHH, IT SEEMS TO CARRY US FAR AWAY...
IT SEEMS TO WELCOME US...
A LA BELLE FRANCE...!
AND, HIGH IN THE SUN-KISSED PYRENEES, TO THE LITTLE VILLAGE OF FRANGLAIS--WHERE AN ANCIENT AND UNIQUE DIALECT IS SPOKEN BY THE INHABITANTS.
NYEEEHH, NYEH-NYEH-NYEH, NNYEEEEEEEHHH...

"A YOUNG MAN IS HOME FROM THE WARS."
LA PLUME DE MA TANTE EST SUR LA TABLE

MERCI, PAUL.
Bienvenue A
FRANGLAIS
Please Drive Carefully
MERCI, FRENCHIE.
WELCOME HOME, MON AMI.
WELCOME BACK, FRENCHIE!
BONJOUR, HELENE!
BONJOUR, FRENCHIE!
BONJOUR, JEAN!
FRENCHIE!!
BONJOUR, JACQUES!
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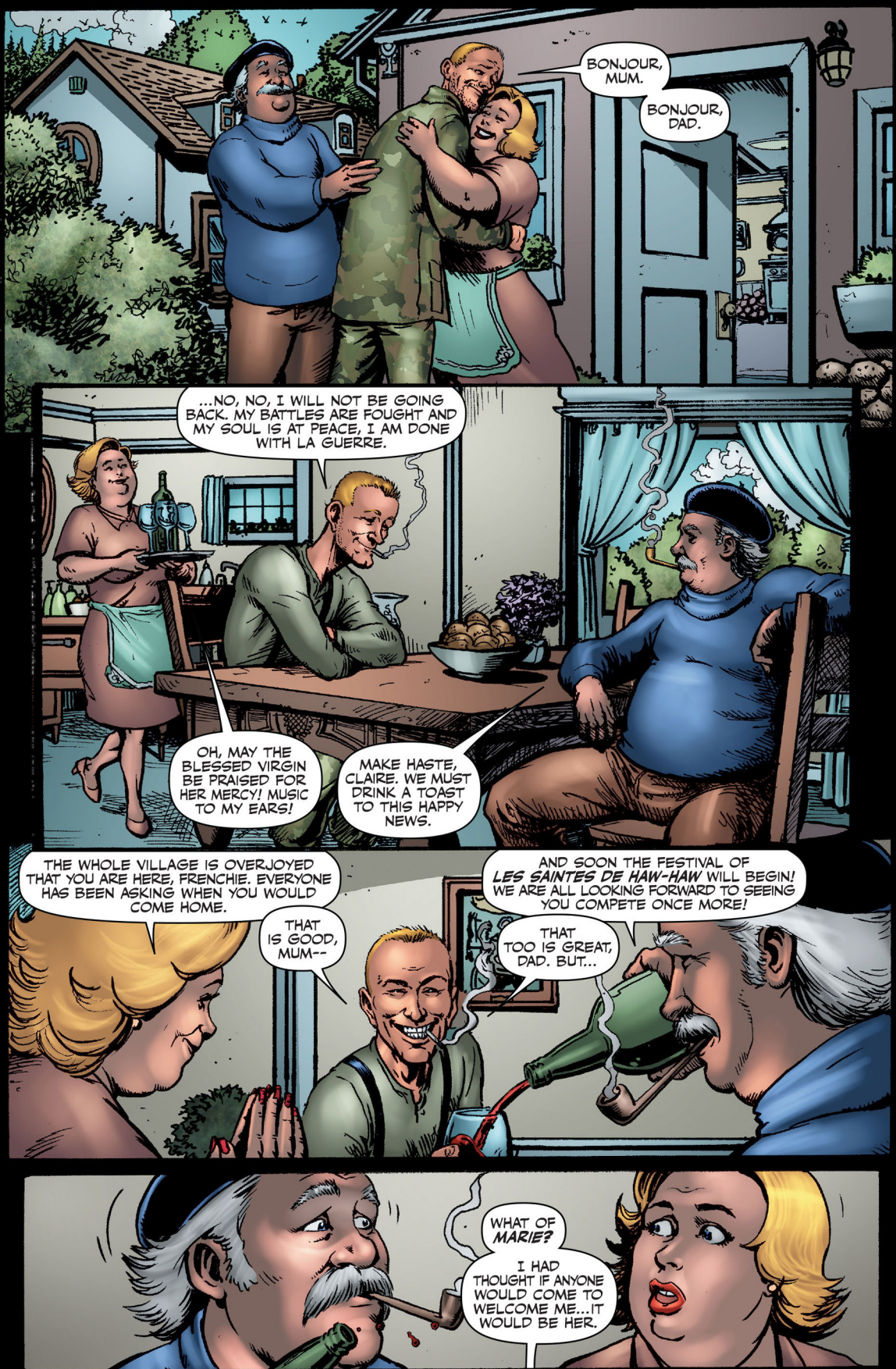
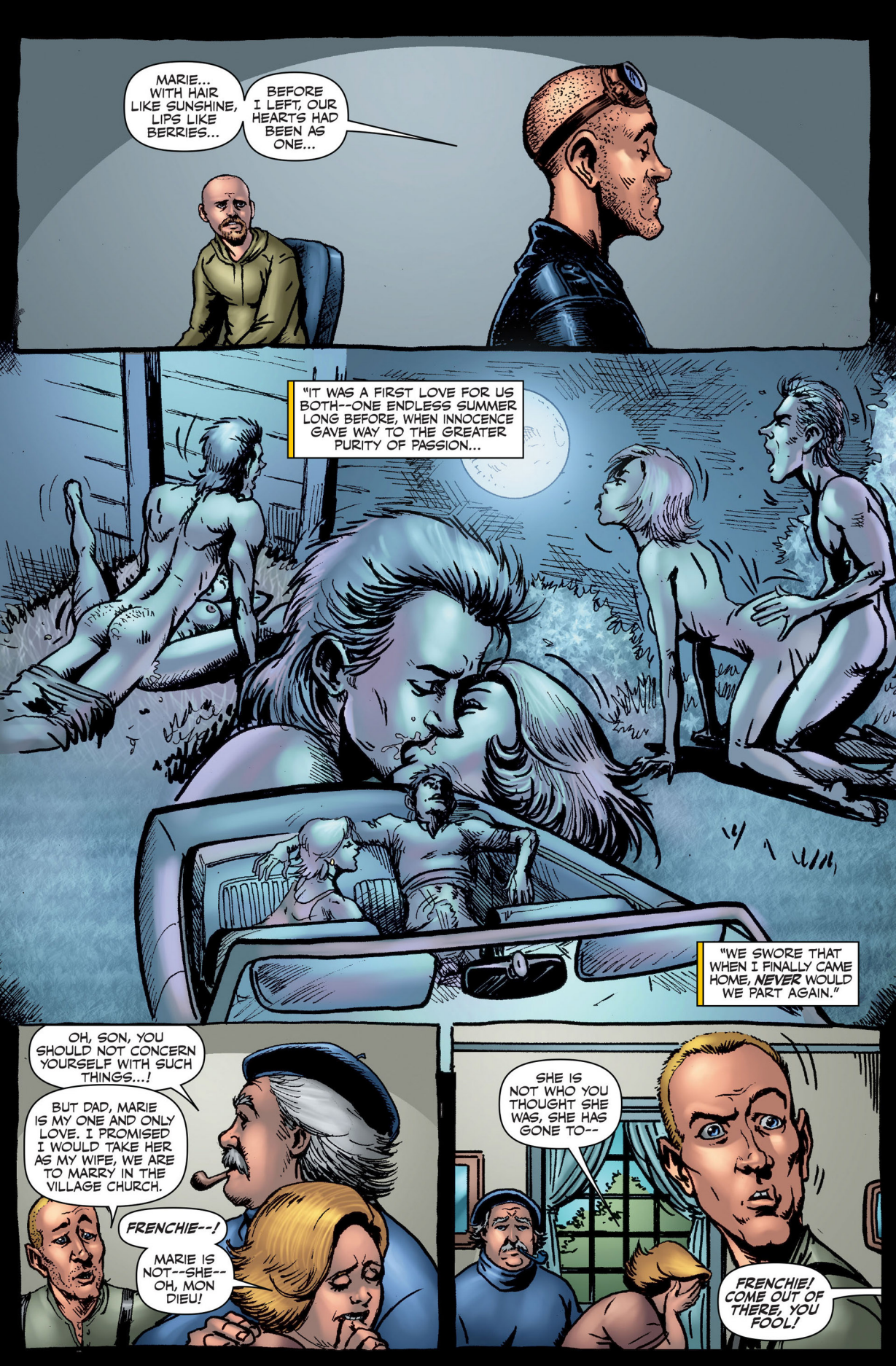
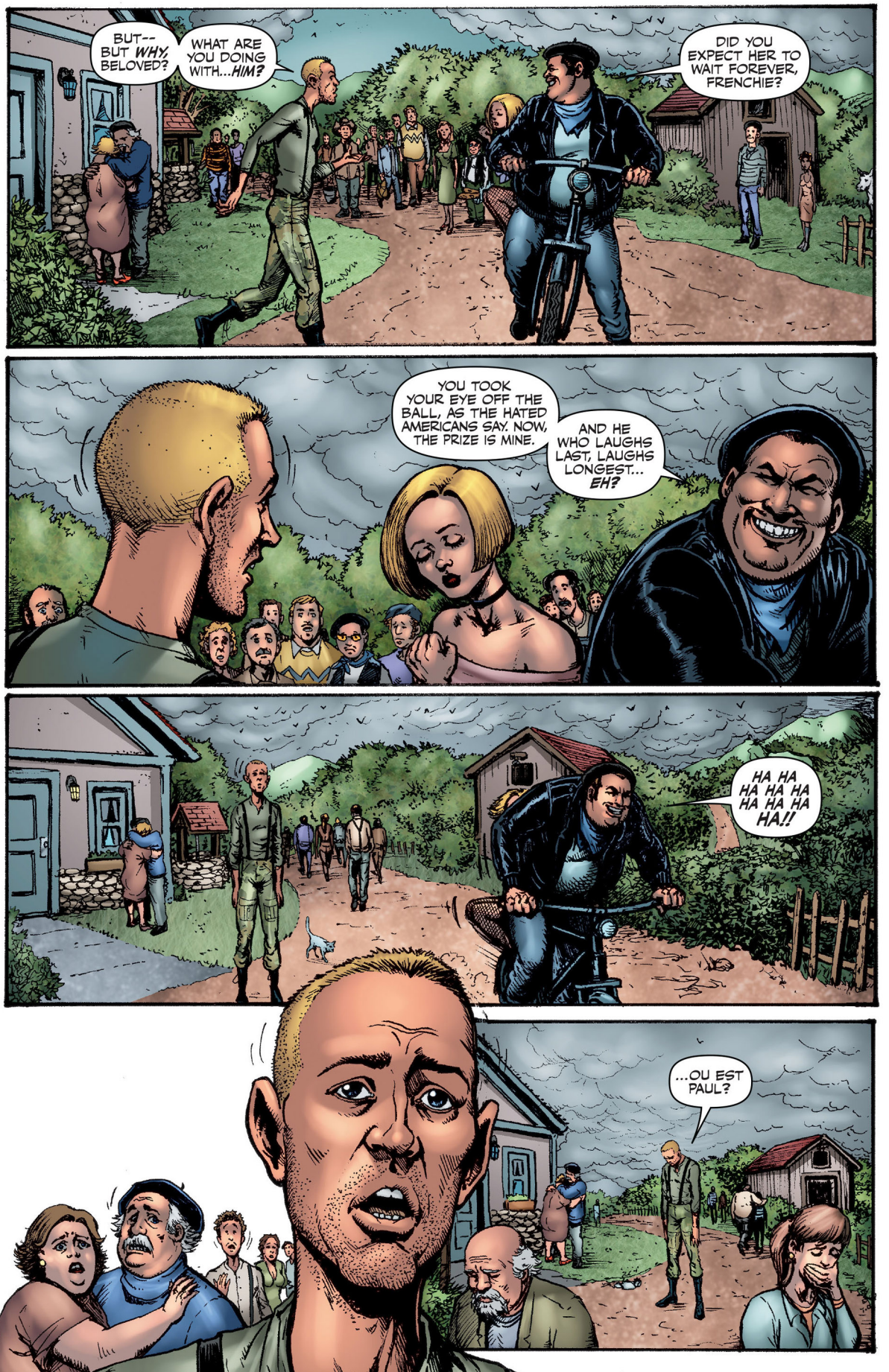
BONJOUR, FRENCHIE.


BONJOUR, MUM.
BONJOUR, DAD.
...NO, NO, I WILL NOT BE GOING BACK. MY BATTLES ARE FOUGHT AND MY SOUL IS AT PEACE, I AM DONE WITH LA GUERRE.
OH, MAY THE BLESSED VIRGIN BE PRAISED FOR HER MERCY! MUSIC TO MY EARS!
MAKE HASTE, CLAIRE. WE MUST DRINK A TOAST TO THIS HAPPY NEWS.
THE WHOLE VILLAGE IS OVERJOYED THAT YOU ARE HERE, FRENCHIE. EVERYONE HAS BEEN ASKING WHEN YOU WOULD COME HOME.
THAT IS GOOD, MUM--
AND SOON THE FESTIVAL OF *LES SAINTES DE HAW-HAW* WILL BEGIN! WE ARE ALL LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU COMPETE ONCE MORE!
THAT TOO IS GREAT, DAD. BUT...
WHAT OF *MARIE?*
I HAD THOUGHT IF ANYONE WOULD COME TO WELCOME ME...IT WOULD BE HER.


MARIE... WITH HAIR LIKE SUNSHINE, LIPS LIKE BERRIES...
BEFORE I LEFT, OUR HEARTS HAD BEEN AS ONE...
"IT WAS A FIRST LOVE FOR US BOTH--ONE ENDLESS SUMMER LONG BEFORE, WHEN INNOCENCE GAVE WAY TO THE GREATER PURITY OF PASSION...
"WE SWORE THAT WHEN I FINALLY CAME HOME, NEVER WOULD WE PART AGAIN."
OH, SON, YOU SHOULD NOT CONCERN YOURSELF WITH SUCH THINGS...!
BUT DAD, MARIE IS MY ONE AND ONLY LOVE. I PROMISED I WOULD TAKE HER AS MY WIFE, WE ARE TO MARRY IN THE VILLAGE CHURCH.
FRENCHIE--!
MARIE IS NOT--SHE-- OH, MON DIEU!
SHE IS NOT WHO YOU THOUGHT SHE WAS, SHE HAS GONE TO--
FRENCHIE! COME OUT OF THERE, YOU FOOL!

WAIT, MY SON! DON'T--
NO--!
M-M-M-MARIE?
MARIE-- ET--
BLACK PIERRE?!
HA, HA-HA-HA-HA-HA, YOU PATHETIC BASTERRD!
"BLACK PIERRE. MY CHILDHOOD RIVAL.
"WHAT A WANKER HE WAS."


BUT-- BUT WHY, BELOVED?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH...HIM?
DID YOU EXPECT HER TO WAIT FOREVER, FRENCHIE?
YOU TOOK YOUR EYE OFF THE BALL, AS THE HATED AMERICANS SAY. NOW, THE PRIZE IS MINE.
AND HE WHO LAUGHS LAST, LAUGHS LONGEST... EH?
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!!
...OU EST PAUL?

MERCI, MON AMI.
CAFÉ MARTIN
MERCI, FRENCHIE.
DOES IT HELP...?
IT HELPS, PAUL.
IT HELPS... TO BREAK MY HEART...
ST. JUDE
FRENCHIE...!
MY SON, MY SON, HOW IT TEARS AT ME TO SEE YOU LIKE THIS!
YOU MUST *FACE* BLACK PIERRE, FRENCHIE! FACE HIM-- AND *FIGHT* FOR WHAT IS YOURS!
I WILL NOT TAKE THAT PATH, DAD.
THE URGE TO FIGHT, TO MAUL, TO MURDER: IT IS THE GREATEST CANCER THAT AFFLICTS MANKIND. IT OBLITERATES THE BODY OF THE VICTIM, AND THE SPIRIT OF THE ONE WHO STRIKES THE BLOW.
I HAVE SEEN IT...

A MOI LA LEGION!!
AND NEVER AGAIN WILL I RAISE MY HAND AGAINST MY FELLOW MAN.

THE DAYS TURNED INTO WEEKS. MIDSUMMER CAME, AND THE GOLDEN CORNFIELDS RIPENED EVERYWHERE BUT IN MY HEART.
I WAS A MAN IN A DREAM, PETIT HUGHIE. BEFORE I KNEW IT, LES SAINTES DE HAW-HAW HAD ARRIVED.
"IT IS A FESTIVAL THAT HAS BEEN HELD IN MY VILLAGE SINCE ANCIENT TIMES: IN WHICH WE CELEBRATE OUR LIFE AMIDST THE GREEN HILLS OF FRANCE, AND GIVE THANKS FOR THE BOUNTY GLEANED FROM HER RICH EARTH.
"IT IS ALSO A TIME WHEN SLIGHTS AND GRIEVANCES ARE SWEPT AWAY, ALL SUCH DISPUTES RESOLVED ACCORDING TO AN HONORABLE AND ANCIENT CUSTOM..."
TROIS... DEUX...UN...!
ALLEZ!
AH-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE-HAW!!

AH-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE-HAW!
AH-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE-HAW!
HAW-HAW!
MON DIEU--!
WELL DONE, M'SIEU!
HONOR IS SATISFIED! MERCI, M'SIEU!
LE VAINQUEUR... RAYMOND DUPERIER!
HAW-HAW! HAW-HAW! HAW-HAW!

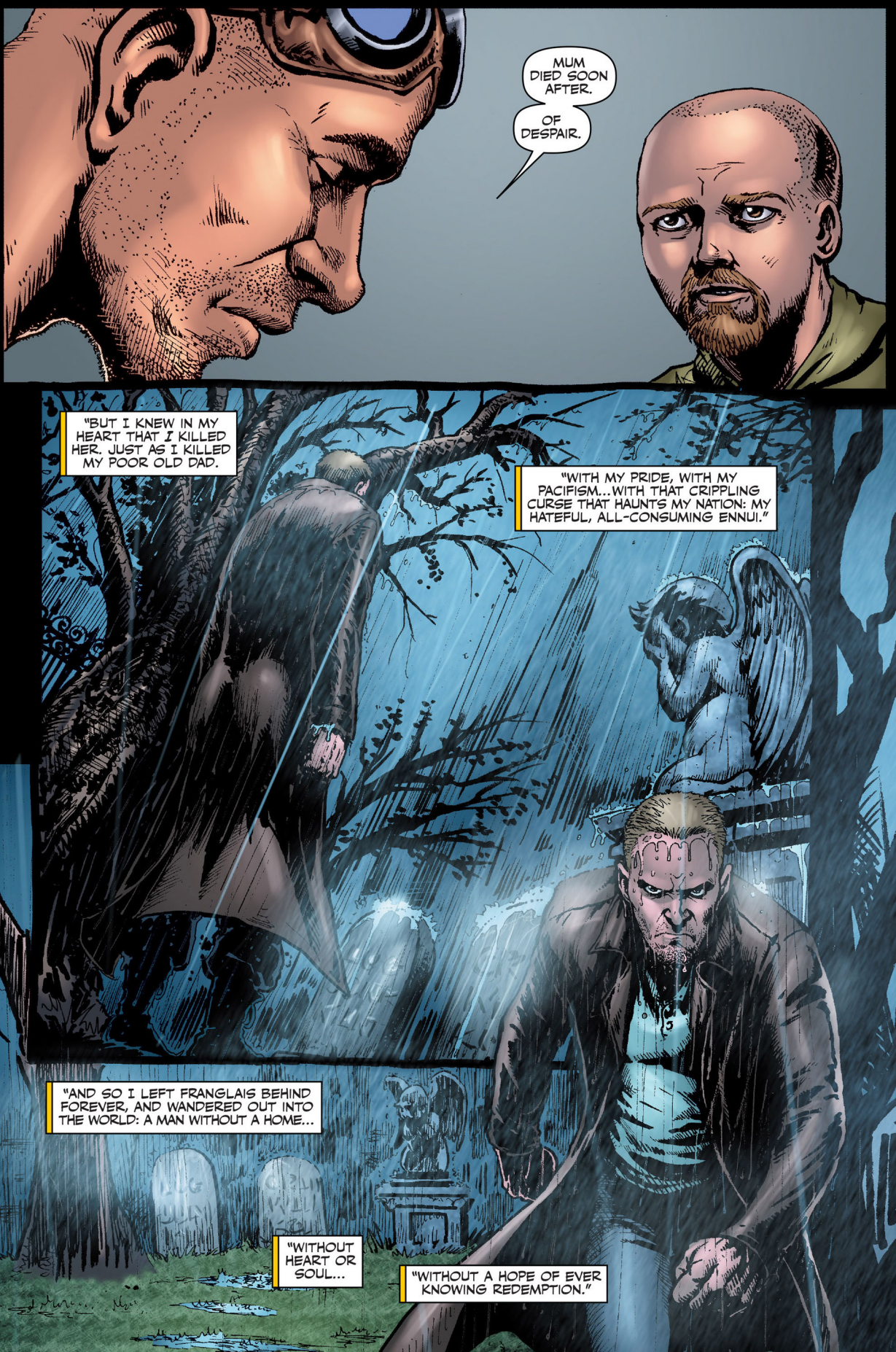
...FRENCHIE, BLACK PIERRE IS OUT THERE EVEN NOW! HE PREENS HIMSELF IN THE VILLAGE SQUARE, IN THE MANNER OF A STRUTTING PEACOCK!
IT IS NONE OF MY AFFAIR, DAD.
YOU MUST CONFRONT HIM, SON! IF ONLY FOR THE HONOR OF OUR FAMILY!
I CANNOT.
MARIE IS GONE. THERE IS NOTHING MORE TO BE SAID.
WE MUST MAKE THE BEST OF IT; TOUT EST POUR LE MIEUX DANS LE MEILLEUR DES MONDES POSSIBLES...
NNAAAAAHH, NOT VOLTAIRE--!
ENOUGH! ENOUGH, I SAY! YOU ARE NOT MY SON!
GEORGES!
I WASH MY HANDS OF YOU, YOU COWARD!
GOOD PEOPLE OF FRANGLAIS, THE LAST CONTEST HAS BEEN DECIDED! LET US CELEBRATE ANOTHER PEACEFUL LES SAINTES DE HAW-HAW.
SO FILL UP YOUR GLASSES--
NON!!
I CHALLENGE BLACK PIERRE!

OLD GEORGES--?
NON, MY HUSBAND, NON! THIS IS FOLLY!
SILENCE, WOMAN.
C'EST UNE QUESTION D'HONNEUR.
MON DIEU...
OLD GEORGES IS TO FACE BLACK PIERRE...
IT IS AS CHUCK BERRY SAYS, YOU NEVER CAN TELL...
PIERRE?
WELL MIGHT THIS GIVE THE VILLAIN PAUSE. THE MEN OF MY FAMILY HAD TRIUMPHED IN THE CONTEST AS LONG AS ANYONE COULD REMEMBER: TO REFUSE MEANT ABSOLUTE HUMILIATION, BUT TO TAKE HIS CHANCES WITH A CHAMPION WAS TO RISK THE VERY SAME.
MUM RUSHED TO FIND ME. AT FIRST I COULD NOT BELIEVE WHAT SHE WAS TELLING ME, THE VERY NOTION SEEMED INSANE...
DAD! NON! YOU ARE TOO OLD, YOUR HEART WILL NEVER STAND THE STRAIN!
OH, MERCIFUL SAVIOR--!
TROIS! DEUX! UN!
ALLEZ!
NON!

AH-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE-HAW!
AH-HAW-HEE-HAW-HEE--
ULP--!
BUT THEN...
IN THAT LAST, TERRIBLE INSTANT...
WEEKS OLD, STALE, AS HARD AS THE GRANITE OF THE PYRENEES BENEATH OUR FEET...
CROISSANT!!
QUE LE--?

NON!!
NNOOOOOOOOOOOONNN!!!
HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!
MERE DE DIEU--
I CANNOT LOOK--
THE HORROR--
"IT WAS THE END OF EVERYTHING, PETIT HUGHIE."

"IT WAS GOLGOTHA."
MON DAAAAAAAAAAAD!!


MUM DIED SOON AFTER.
OF DESPAIR.
"BUT I KNEW IN MY HEART THAT I KILLED HER. JUST AS I KILLED MY POOR OLD DAD.
"WITH MY PRIDE, WITH MY PACIFISM...WITH THAT CRIPPLING CURSE THAT HAUNTS MY NATION: MY HATEFUL, ALL-CONSUMING ENNUI."
"AND SO I LEFT FRANGLAIS BEHIND FOREVER, AND WANDERED OUT INTO THE WORLD: A MAN WITHOUT A HOME...
"WITHOUT HEART OR SOUL...
"WITHOUT A HOPE OF EVER KNOWING REDEMPTION."

"OF BLACK PIERRE AND HIS EVENTUAL FATE, I WILL NOT SPEAK."
"LIKEWISE THE TREACHEROUS MARIE, AND HER SICKENING PLEAS FOR ME TO TAKE HER BACK."
"I DRANK, OF COURSE. TO FILL THE BOTTOMLESS CHASM IN MY SOUL.
"WHEN THAT WAS NOT ENOUGH, I LEARNED TO QUENCH MY THIRST WITH TROUBLE."
YOU SPILLED MY DRINK.
SUCH THINGS WERE MEANINGLESS.
GUILT BURNED INSIDE ME WITH A DULL BROWN FLAME. SELF-PITY HOVERED ROUND IT LIKE A FART.
MY LIFE BEGAN TO BLUR...

WHAT'D YOU SAY, FROGGY?
I SAID YOU SPILLED MY DRINK.
I WOULD LIKE YOU TO REPLACE IT.
NE VOUS INQUIETEZ PAS, C'EST A MOI--
NO, IT IS ON HIM.
TELL YOU WHAT, WHY DON'T WE JUST CALL IT PAYBACK FOR SAVIN' YOUR ASS FROM THE NAZIS? YOU KNOW, THAT WHOLE THING WHERE YOU DIDN'T GROW UP SPEAKIN' GERMAN?
THAT WAS YOU PERSONALLY?
WHAT?
YOU SEEM SO YOUNG. WERE YOU WITH PATTON OR WITH HODGES?
WHAT THE FUCK'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT--?
YOU STUPID, WORTHLESS, KNUCKLEDRAGGING LUMP OF DOGSHIT. YOU SEEK TO INVOKE MY COUNTRY'S HISTORY, BUT YOU DO NOT EVEN KNOW YOUR OWN.
YOU ARE A DISGRACE TO THE UNITED STATES. FUCK YOU.
I'LL KICK YOUR FUCKIN' AAAAAAAAAAHH!
EAU
HMMM.
WHAT I NEED NOW...
LEGION ETRANGERE PREMIER SECRET

IS A MAD CUNT.
GET THE LITTLE FUCKER!
UUUUNNGHH!!
"AND THAT, I SUPPOSE, IS THE END OF MY TALE.
"A U.S. AIR FORCE FLIGHT TO WASHINGTON, A SHOT OF COMPOUND V, A STYLISH LEATHER OVERCOAT..."
A NEW HOME.
AN' YOU'VE BEEN WITH THE BOYS EVER SINCE, EH?
WITH THE BOYS *A L'OUTRANCE*, PETIT HUGHIE.
WH--
"TO THE BITTER END."

JESUS!
YOU KNOW, THAT'S THE MADDEST FUCKIN' THING I'VE EVER HEARD IN MY LIFE. D'YOU THINK IT'S *TRUE?*
LAST LINE'S THE BIT THAT COUNTS, MATE.
JINGS.
THE END